

life and age of advancing civilisation. For instance, more would be expected from the Duke of Wellington than from Alexander, and from Alexander than from Theseus.

4. We must not leave out of sight the value of the children's co-operation and the teacher's enthusiasm, and this last brings me to the point from which I started.

"For what, after all, is the source of all good work, but a God-enthused soul, which, having a vision of the ideal, guards the monotony of work from becoming the monotony of life?" (Westcott).

DISCUSSION ON THE PAPER ON PLUTARCH.

Miss Whittall asked whether one would stop to explain the words while reading.

Miss Smeeton replied that it would be better not to interrupt the reading, but explain after the reading and before the narration. She suggested telling the story quite simply and shortly first if the children find it difficult to understand.

Miss Parish asked which parts were best to select and how to fill in the connecting threads.

Miss Smeeton said she picked out what bears chiefly on the man's life and character. She found *Smith's Classical History of Greece* also *Oman's* useful in obtaining a fair knowledge, which would help her to fill in the threads.

In answer to Miss Flower's question as to whether Plutarch's Lives are used for composition in Classes II. and III., Miss Smeeton thought it would be rather difficult for Class II. to write, and better for them to narrate, letting them draw diagrams of battle, etc., or sketch maps on the board. Class III. can quite well use the Lives for composition.

A question was raised how to get over the difficulty of the language. Miss Parish said she had never found any difficulty in the language, even with children of eight and nine. They seem to be held and fascinated by it, and Plutarch seems to have quite a magical influence. Miss W.

Kitching thought one might explain it first, as long as one did not omit reading Plutarch's actual words. Miss Parish said she thought it better to talk it over with the children than to tell the story first in one's own words. They lose by having the story told them first, as is shown by the way they will afterwards narrate in the teacher's words, not in the language of Plutarch as it is intended they should. We must not turn it into an oral lesson. Miss Rothera said she had used *Tanglewood Tales* last term for Theseus. Miss Parish thought it would have been better to fall back on Charles Kingsley's *Heroes*.

INFLUENCE AND IDEALS.

BY MISS BRADLEY.

My paper is to deal with the question of personal influence in education as opposed to ideals.

The suggestions given by the student who asked for the paper have puzzled me a good deal, but I hope the discussion later on will show where I missed her point and suggest all sorts of cases in which the question of personal influence would crop up.

These are the suggestions sent me: "How far is it right for a teacher to enforce her personality and views on a child, or, rather, should a teacher insist on a child doing things for her own moral good or should she simply point out the ideal and leave the child to neglect the means of attaining it, until she finds out at long last that it is better to strive after an ideal than not to strive at all? The latter way is an extremely slow process and needs much patience on the part of the teacher, but is it a higher way of educating than the other?" You see, a good deal of ground is covered!

"Should the teacher insist on a child doing things for her moral good?" What things are meant? Not, I suppose, cleanliness, punctuality, order, politeness, and other good and necessary everyday habits which affect the whole household and prepare the ground for the foundations of sound

character. Perhaps the choice and reading of books, use of spare time, courage, fair play and generosity, and so on, are meant, for these are things which fall outside routine class work to a great extent.

I shall say something later on about insisting by means of a command, but first I want to speak about another way of insisting which is only too effective with many children. I mean making a child do things by using all the influence I have over him through his affections or fear, for instance, to cast a gloom over nursery or schoolroom when I want to make my displeasure felt and bring a small rebel to believe himself very naughty. I should call this insisting by means of atmospheric pressure and it is apt to become a very dangerous abuse of personal influence, unless used very sparingly with very small folk or on very serious occasions to waken a sluggish conscience. It concentrates the attention on my personal feelings and makes it appear to the child as if what was wrong . . . were made more wrong because I am grieved. If I am really worried . . . a normal child is quite sensitive enough to know it, without my laying deliberate stress on my feelings. . . . The only way to bring home to a child the force of moral law is to teach it as dispassionately as possible, and to keep personal feeling in the background.

In an earlier generation moral law was generally considered as altogether dependent upon and sanctioned by religion, so that though education was more arbitrary than nowadays, there was less danger of the force and universality of moral law being obscured. . . . If we have lost some of that sternly dutiful spirit, we have still gained much; we recognise moral law as distinct from religion but only to be perfectly interpreted and understood by the power of the Spirit which is the source of religion.

How can we, under these conditions, best secure the child's allegiance to moral law? By precept and example, of course, but that is not enough; we must aim (1) at doing away with the excitement of personal feeling when we try

to win this allegiance, and (2) at making him feel as soon as possible that his action is his own when he follows up "I ought" by "I will." To impose our will on a child with the idea of making him more moral seems on the face of it absurd. At any rate, in theory it is to take out of his hands all reasoning and judgment, to leave him no power of choice but in the degree of promptness and meekness with which he obeys. Of course, I presuppose cases . . . which are not beyond the child's power of willing. For instance, the degree of perseverance he brings to bear on a new or difficult game, the trouble he takes in packing flowers for a hospital, etc. There will always be many things that must be insisted on in order to preserve discipline . . . and form good habits and overcome special weakness. . . . A character worth having is the result of continued individual effort to make right action follow on right thought. . . . So far as we know at present a jelly-fish is non-moral because its instincts carry it through life leaving no room for choice. To be satisfied with right behaviour which is the result of our insistence and not of the child's right thought . . . is to ignore the fundamental principles of morality. Please do not think I mean right conduct is never to be insisted on; we must be policemen sometimes, but we have to keep before us in every light that one great ideal of the educator is so to rule that the child shall be prepared and fit . . . to take the government of himself gradually into his own hands.

So far my experience has been chiefly with only children, girls between twelve and eighteen, and in the intimate relations which grow up in such cases, the danger of using influence unwisely was difficult to guard against. Those who have been with girls till they "come out" know the violent temptations during the last terms to give continual moral prods, because the time seems too short to wait and see if ideals have been grasped and character growing. . . . We have to face very seriously the questions: Are the principles she acknowledged in the schoolroom really her own? Has she the will to act on them in altered circum-

stances? Has she the knowledge and reasoning power to adapt her life to the new conditions on those principles? When a girl leaves the schoolroom it is fair to expect her to have an active, well-controlled body and mind and the foundations of sound character rooted in principles to which she gives a reasonable allegiance, so that she will not find herself stranded when left to her own resources.

If all her life she has been made to do things because somebody else "thinks she ought to" she will either submit and get into the habit of adopting other people's standard of right or she will rebel and hate the idea of duty, obligation and moral good. The former is the greater danger, for the rebel will learn by experience the force of moral law. But the pliable dependent child, with her ready-made standard, . . . will become one of those amiable people who have an exaggerated respect for other people's opinions and attempt to share them, without trying them by any standard of their own. They have no moral stability—no sound character.

I am afraid this paper is scarcely fighting the battle between influence and ideals. In fact I have not time to say much about ideals in moral education, and we must all know how much depends upon a right use of ideas as we have Miss Mason's books to put the case before us. I may take that for granted and say what I can of the dangers of a personal influence which usurps the place of moral law and arrests or weakens character. In fact, though I have tried to get away from it in this paper, influence is like "King Charles's Head"—I cannot get away from it.

. . . How *are* we to guard against influence? We must be the interpreters of moral law till the child can recognise and give direct allegiance to it; even when he can do this, his mental and moral limitations make him dependent upon us to a great extent.

The suggestion is given by the student who asked for this paper that "the ideal should be pointed out and the child left to neglect the means of attaining it, until she finds out at last that it is better to strive after an ideal than not to strive

at all." This seems hardly practicable, and so much depends on the disposition, age, degree of self-control and thoughtfulness that has been attained. We know ourselves that often the rightness and desirability of an action is not enough to make us do it; a child's will being weaker and his sense of personal responsibility more restricted, we cannot leave him without any help at all. Once he has made an idea his own—*i.e.*, has the right motive power—he must have as much liberty and responsibility in acting on that idea as is possible, but at the same time we must watch and try to make sure that the idea *is* acted on.

As long as a child's growth is more or less unconscious, on the lines of good habits, he does not resent or even realise that his development is watched, but once a child . . . begins to find his personality and moral nature interesting, then we have to find some way of giving definite moral teaching in a simple—and most important—impersonal form. He is ready for the appeal to his reason, and the springs of action he recognises in himself, and we must have a common standard by which to deal with his failures in right conduct. Miss Mason's book, *Ourselves*, just meets this difficulty, and does away with the need for perpetually pointing the moral which is so bad for young things. Her book makes it less dangerous to use our influence to help them over stony places, while it leaves us plenty to do in widening the child's mental horizon by suggesting new applications for moral principles and using every means to strengthen the ideas which provide the motive power. . . .

DISCUSSION ON "INFLUENCE AND IDEALS."

One student stated a difficulty which had occurred to her concerning the right use of influence. Her pupil, a boy of nine, behaved in an exemplary manner in the schoolroom, but she knew that in the nursery he caused great disturbance by his unruly behaviour, and she felt sure that if she told him to be good and do as nurse said he would do it because *she* told him. So far she had refrained from doing

so, knowing that his obedience in such a case would be due to her personal influence and not to any wish on his part to follow a right course. The general opinion seemed to be that she should give him the principle of obedience to authority at all times and all places.

Someone else said how difficult it was in the case of older children to avoid imposing one's own opinions on them. And in this connection it was suggested that where the bias of the family lay on one side the teacher might very well state the case clearly for the other side.

In the case of children who get very little moral help from their home life, and rely very largely on that which they receive in the schoolroom during the term, one student said she had given her pupil the idea of holidays being a time when she could live her own life and fly with her own wings, and each time as the holidays came round she would find she could fly better, until at last when the time came when her schoolroom life was over, and she would have to fly by herself.

DISCUSSION ON RECITATION.

Miss Smeeton said she had known children who were nervous when they had to say their recitations at the end of the term. She had found that if they acted a scene from Shakespeare instead of reciting, their nervousness disappeared.

Miss Whittall asked whether the children should be corrected *while* they are saying their poetry, or *after* they have said it. The general opinion was that they should be corrected at the end. "You have made one or two mistakes. Notice that it is 'these,' not 'those' in verse 2, etc." If corrected in this way, it was stated that the second time the recitation would be perfect.

It was asked whether the poems chosen for the younger children should be based on a story. The general opinion was "Yes."

The amount learned per week was generally one poem or one hymn.

Class IV. will find their poems more interesting if they choose them from the works of the authors they are studying for the term's work. This can generally be done.

One student stated that her children could learn their poems or hymns if they wrote them down. They could *not* learn them if they simply heard them or read them. Was it allowable to write them down? Yes, certainly, if the children found them more easy to learn in that way.

DISCUSSION ON SOCIAL WORK.

(Opened by Miss W. Kitching in the place of Miss Pennethorne.)

Although I am not able to do anything much with the children I now teach, I am greatly interested in this subject. Surely this question of social work is one in which all—big and little—should take an interest. It is no one's choice whether they are born among the rich or poor, and not always much to do with them whether they have many or few of this world's privileges and much or little of this world's goods. It is surely right therefore that the privileged ones should help those who are less fortunately placed.

To quote from Miss Mason's letter to us: "I suppose we all feel drawn to work as did our Master among the poor." But even if this is not directly possible to us—to quote again—"to work among and influence those who will in their turn labour for working people on a wider scale and with more ample success than we could hope for is to work in a special way for the coming of the Kingdom."

Taking first the question of the children with whom we work. There are many ways of interesting them and enabling them to take their share in this social work, especially nowadays when there are so many societies for helping mankind in various ways. Most of the societies have special

branches for children, such as the Young Helpers' League (Dr. Barnardo's), The League of Pity (S.P.C. to Animals, I believe), The Sunbeam Mission, and many others. It always seems to me that as far as children are concerned, help in kind is better than help in money. Making garments for poor children, and gifts for hospitals and homes is better than merely collecting money. Also . . . one should not work too much in an indefinite general way, but have special objects for one's efforts and affections, such as a child in an orphanage, a cot in a hospital, a cripple or some afflicted child in whose life there is not much sunshine, etc.

Surely our children should also be taught to take an interest in the children of other lands; not merely learning about them in geography, . . . but that in many cases their lives are shadowed by ignorance and superstition, instead of being illumined by care and love. . . .

Then looking at the subject from the point of view of ourselves. One thing is quite certain. We cannot interest our children in that in which we ourselves are not interested. Miss Mason in her letter opened up a far larger field of social work than had occurred to me, in thinking over this subject on Monday after I had promised to open this discussion in Miss Pennethorne's place. May I refer you to Miss Mason's letter again. ("It behoves us all" to "definite help," pp. 9 and 10). . . . There is probably no one here that does not rejoice in the Children Bill, and would be ready to support one even more stringent. We probably all have views and opinions—at any rate, those of us who have poor districts to visit. . . . Then, again, Workmen's Insurance (contributory or non-contributory), Old Age Pensions, Temperance, and other matters are subjects on which every woman ought to know something, and have opinions so as to influence others, until we get a vote of our own. Then Miss Mason says, and more than all, (for this we are specially commanded,) missionary work.

Most colleges support a Settlement or something of the kind, of their own. We have not done this yet, but as Miss

Mason says again, we might well annex the one at Hoxton where a student well known to many here—Mabel Conder—has been at work for some time. We cannot all do *direct* social work, but no one need be shut out from taking a share indirectly. An article appeared in a number of "L'Umile Pianta" some time back, from Miss Conder, asking for help from the College. I should like to see something definite done in this direction, such as the College making itself responsible for a certain sum each year for the support of the work; and then those that could might give practical help in many ways. . . . This would connect us definitely with Home Mission work.

There is also a splendid opportunity just now to associate ourselves as definitely with Foreign Missionary work. Another of our number (Miss J. Smyth) is just finishing her training and in October goes abroad—I believe to Uganda, in Central Africa—to carry on educational work as a missionary there.

Anyone who has read anything of that part of the world knows how fascinating its history is; the development of both people and country in a very short space of time is marvellous, and to my mind, anyone that can go and take a share in such work is a most fortunate person. But why cannot we here take up this as a branch of Foreign work connected with our college? Some of Miss Mason's books have been already sent out there, and there are missionary children there belonging to the P.U.S. Some day there will probably be a branch of the P.N.E.U. I believe there is already one of the Mothers' Union, if not more than one, among the natives. Why should not black mothers learn to bring up their children in the best way possible, just as much as white mothers?

That it is worth while is surely shown by some of those representatives in London at the time of the Pan-Anglican Congress. Some of the finest speeches were made by men of the negro type; the finest, not so much from a literary point of view (although some attained a very high level in

that respect), but in the wide intellectual outlook that they took.

We are, perhaps, among the most favoured bodies of women workers, and therefore it is especially incumbent on us as educationalists to take a world-wide view of our responsibilities and to carry out the command: "Freely ye have received, freely give."

DISCUSSION ON SOCIAL WORK FOR CHILDREN.

It was suggested that children might be trained to think for others by sending country flowers to cripple children; by making articles of clothing for poor children; by having a "Sunbeam" child in whom they would be specially interested. Sometimes the parents allowed the "Sunbeam" child to spend a week with the children who were interested in him, either at the gardener's cottage or (in rare cases) actually in the house. This plan, when adopted, had proved beneficial to both parties.

The question was raised whether the fear of infection should hinder parents from allowing their children to visit or in other ways come in contact with poor children, and it was generally felt that children ought to be allowed to run no unnecessary risks. In this point the Conference disagreed with the paper.

The question was then raised as to how far children should be instructed in the questions of the day, such as Unemployment, Woman Suffrage, etc. It was suggested that much was learned by them from ordinary discussions at table, but that it was important to let them hear both sides of a question without trying to impose upon them personal opinions.

It was decided, as a practical outcome of the paper and discussion that the students should subscribe yearly (the subscriptions being due at Easter and payable to Miss Laurence) to Home and Foreign Missions. It was thought that no better object for the Home Mission subscription

could be found than Miss Conder's Children's Settlement at Hoxton—Miss Conder being an ex-student—and it was agreed that half the subscriptions should be sent to her and half to Miss Smyth, who is going abroad as a missionary, possibly to Uganda.

SOME SUGGESTIONS FOR OCCUPATIONS FOR SUNDAYS AND WET DAYS.

By Miss HIRTZEL.

SUNDAY OCCUPATIONS.—One of the chief difficulties in the way of Sunday occupations appears to be the fact that most people have not made up their minds as to what constitutes "keeping the Sabbath." Some are very lax indeed; others err on the side of strictness. Whether one should make arbitrary rules or not, and how far young people should be allowed to judge for themselves, are two vexed questions which constantly crop up. . . . What we need are some general lines laid down, with plenty of margin, as to the spirit in which our young people should look on the "day of rest." . . . I think a good general principle is that the day should be one of harmony and of consideration for others.

As regards the occupations available for Sunday, I can only give my own experience, and must trust that there will be free discussion. Perhaps it will be helpful if we first run over the whole day and find out at what time "occupations" are most needed. I am taking it for granted that all but the very little children will go to church once at least, and that probably in the morning; and as most children have pets to attend to and the church is often some distance away, there is not much time after breakfast. Still there are exceptions, and this is where the governess comes in. The mother very often has visitors or is otherwise occupied and cannot attend to the children. Sometimes a little manœuvring has to be resorted to: the girls are